

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CARACA 01815 011937Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 /031 W
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R 011646Z MAR 74
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2858

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, VE

SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN ATTENDANCE OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS
SEMINAR

REF: A. STATE 34158; B. STATE 24605 REPEATED TO
CARACAS IN STATE 37554

1. ONLY 11 DAYS REMAIN UNTIL NEW VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT WILL BE INAUGURATED ON MARCH 12. WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT WISE AT THIS TIME TO INVITE RENE TORRES BARRALT, AND TO EXTEND INVITATION FOR ANOTHER VENEZUELAN AT VENEZUELAN EXPENSE, TO ATTEND SEMINAR IN MAY, WELL AFTER NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL HAVE TAKEN OVER. THESE ARE MATTERS TO BE DECIDED UPON WITH NEW GOVERNMENT, AFTER IT HAS TAKEN OVER.

2. WE CONCUR IN PRINCIPLE IN INVITING TORRES, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT IT. TORRES IS HIGHLY-MOTIVATED SOCIAL AND RELIEF SPECIALIST, AND IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE AS EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF FUNDASOCIAL. TWICE, HOWEVER, SINCE HIS DISASTER TRAINING IN UNITED STATES HE HAS APPROACHED US ON URGENT BASIS FOR DISASTER ASSISTANCE WHEN VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT WAS OBVIOUSLY CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH SITUATION. HE IS REASONABLE MAN AND ACCEPTED OUR POSITION THAT WE COULD NOT FAVORABLY RECOMMEND U.S. ASSISTANCE WHEN PROBLEM WAS MERELY ONE OF OBTAINING EXPEDITIOUS ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FROM APPROPRIATE VENEZUELAN MINISTRIES. DETERMINING FACTOR IN OUR CONCURRENCE IN PRINCIPLE IN HIS BEING INVITED IS DEPARTMENT'S VIEW THAT HIS PARTICIPATION IN PART OF SEMINAR WOULD BE OF SUBSTANTIAL BENEFIT TO SEMINAR AS WHOLE.

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TO INVITE HIM AND MAKE DEFINITE ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE

CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION, HOWEVER, MIGHT
ESTRANGE HIM FROM NEW ADMINISTRATION.

3. INVITATION TO ANOTHER VENEZUELAN TO ATTEND AT VENEZUELAN
EXPENSE IS EVEN MORE CLEARLY MATTER TO BE RAISED WITH NEW
ADMINISTRATION. IF NEW ADMINISTRATION WISHES TO SEND QUALIFIED
MAN FOR SUCH TRAINING AT ITS OWN EXPENSE, WE SHOULD SURELY
PROVIDE IT. IT WOULD
BE INAPPROPRIATE, HOWEVER, TO MAKE SUCH ARRANGEMENTS UNDER
LAME-DUCK ADMINISTRATION IN ITS FINAL DAYS.

4. IF DEPARTMENT APPROVES OUR RECOMMENDATION, WE ARE PREPARED
TO CALL IN TORRES AND INFORM HIM THAT HE IS INVITED AT OUR
EXPENSE AND ANOTHER VENEZUELAN WOULD BE WELCOME AT VENEZUELAN
EXPENSE BUT IN BOTH INSTANCES ONLY AT REQUEST OF NEW ADMINIS-
TRATION. WE ARE WILLING TO CALL TORRES IN NOW AND TELL HIM
THIS, TO EXPEDITE DECISION, BUT WOULD MAKE CLEAR TO HIM THAT
WE COULD TAKE ACTION ONLY AFTER NEW ADMINISTRATION COMES INTO
POWER.
MCCLINTOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONNEL TRAINING, FUND ALLOTMENT, VISITS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 MAR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974CARACA01815
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: CARACAS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740376/aaaacshy.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. STATE 34158; B. STATE 24605 REPEA, TED TO
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <26-Sep-2002 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VENEZUELAN ATTENDANCE OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SEMINAR
TAGS: EAID, VE, (TORRES BARRALT, RENE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005